

Board Commitment Letter

Dear Believe in Bristol Board member:

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the board of Believe in Bristol, Inc. In agreeing to serve on the board, you are embracing our vision and mission:

Our vision for downtown Bristol is one community whose heart is a vibrant downtown; where our unique cultural and historical heritage is celebrated; where a sustainable vigorous economy is enjoyed; and where the quality of life is enhanced by abundant opportunities for living, working, shopping and playing.

Our mission is to hold in trust Bristol's dreams and help bring them to reality.

We expect the following from our board members:

Attendance: Our meetings are the first Tuesday each month, 7:45 am /coffee, 8:00 a.m./business in the Believe in Bristol Office, 6 Sixth Street, Suite 351 Central Building, Bristol TN unless otherwise noted. Any board member who is absent without just cause from three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the board, may be removed.

Financial: Board members are expected to support the organization and the Main Street program at whatever level of contribution that is comfortable and acceptable.

Board Terms: Board terms are three years beginning April 1 and board members may be reelected for no more than one consecutive term.

Service: Board meeting and preparation time should be 2 to 3 hours a month, and each board member is encouraged to serve on one committee. Mentoring can be helpful for folks new to the organization.

Sincerely,

Vicie Dotson
President

Please sign your name if you understand your board member obligations.

X _____ Date: _____

Believe in Bristol approved 2-07
Updated 5/10

SAMPLE BOARD MEMBER AGREEMENT

As a member of the Board of Directors (Trustees) of _____, I agree to support the mission of the organization. I understand that my duties and responsibilities include the following:

1. I am legally responsible, along with other board members, for this organization. I am responsible to know and approve all policies, participate in strategic planning and be familiar with all programs and services. Along with the other board members and in partnership with the artistic and executive/managing director, I oversee the implementation of policies and programs of _____.
2. I am fiscally responsible, with other board members, for this organization. It is my duty to be active in monitoring _____'s income and expense, in planning the budget and in fundraising to meet the budget.
3. I am morally responsible for the health and well being of this organization. As a member of the board, I pledge to carry out my duties to _____ with the highest degree of ethics.
4. I agree to respect, listen to and treat courteously all people involved with _____.
5. I will make a good faith effort to do my best to support the fundraising goals of _____. I agree to participate in fundraising activities as follows:
 - I will give an annual personal donation of (insert specific amount) **or** (if an amount is not established insert a statement, such as "at an amount that makes me feel proud").
 - I will share names of prospective donors for fundraising activities.
 - I will attend and actively participate in programs of _____.
 - I will talk about the work and the achievements of the _____ with colleagues and friends.
 - I will participate in the following as often as I can:
 - help identify and establish contacts with potential corporate and foundation donors;
 - identify sources of in-kind contributions;
 - send letters/requests/personal notes on fundraising appeals to friends;
 - ask friends, family, business associates to make gifts to _____;
 - help plan, organize, and participate in fundraising events.
6. I agree to serve on and actively participate in at least one standing committee of the Board.
7. I agree to attend full Board meetings and committee meetings as required by committee work plan. I understand that I am required to attend at least three-quarters (**or specific #**) of the total meetings per year to remain in good standing as a Board member.

In turn, _____ (organization) is responsible to me the following ways:

1. I will be provided with board meeting agendas and other meeting materials in advance, including a quarterly financial report with monthly updates.
2. I can call on the artistic and executive/managing directors and chair/president of the board to discuss the programs, policies, goals and objectives of the organization.
3. I will be provided with straightforward, thorough and timely responses to any questions I have during the course of carrying out my fiscal, legal, or moral responsibilities to this organization.

Board member name: (Print) _____

Board member signature & date _____

Sample Board Composition Matrix: List the expertise, attributes and reach needed for your board in the far-left column. Enter the names of your current board members across the top. Indicate with a check the skills sets and access that each brings to your board. The results will show where you are lacking board member attributes and access and will help focus your board recruitment efforts.

Category/Expertise/Attributes: (Insert Your Industry)	R. Smith	M. Jones	T. Sikes	S. Brown	A. Moore	J. Fink	G. Henry	B. Chase	C. Bird
Performing Arts									
Artist/performer									
Arts Consumer	✓		✓						
Other			✓		✓			✓	
Legal/Administrative:									
Legal									
Financial		✓							
Management/Accounting									✓
Nonprofit board experience	✓								
Nonprofit management experience			✓			✓			✓
Strategic Planning			✓				✓		✓
Resource Development			✓						✓
Corporate Leadership									
Prior fundraising experience	✓								
Special Events	✓							✓	✓
Communications:		✓							✓
Design									
Marketing									
Technology (hardware/software)						✓			
Community Relations/Public Relations/Media experience				✓		✓			
Other:							✓		
Community Leadership									
Individuals with experience in legislative process					✓				
Individuals from specific genders, ages, ethnicities or geographic areas.		✓			✓			✓	

Mary Ann de Barbieri, 1.25.06

HOW TO BUILD AN EFFECTIVE BOARD IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Necva Ozgur

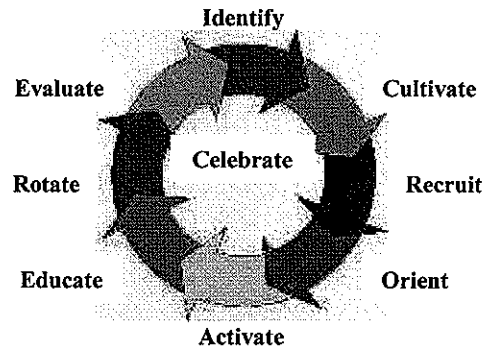
Islamic schools in America are aiming for excellence. Excellence can only be achieved if every component of the school aims for excellence. We expect excellence from our teachers and administrators, so we also expect excellence from our board members. Every non-profit executive wants to have an ideal board whose members are deeply committed to the mission of the school, who talk about the school passionately, who bring different areas of expertise to the board, and who are willing to ask for funds for the school. Does such an ideal board exist? Strong, effective boards do not occur automatically; an ideal board must be built with careful planning, diligence, and continuous evaluation. Usually, the Board Development Committee (Governance Committee) is charged with this important task.

A growing trend among nonprofit boards is the establishment of a committee to deal with a range of governance issues. This committee is called Committee on Trustees, Governance Committee, or Board Development Committee.

The purpose of this Committee is to make certain that the board is constantly working on its level of efficiency. For instance, the Committee could decide to replace one person with another person who has different skills more suitable to the growth of the organization. Or, upon observing a reduction in the enthusiasm and participation of the board, the Committee would make some phone calls, book an emergency meeting, or conduct a board self-evaluation. In short, the Committee should be the lifeline of the board and organization. It should regularly ensure that the organization is bringing about results and that the organization is running resourcefully and honestly. The responsibility of board development, education, assessment, and recruitment of new members falls upon the shoulders of the Committee.

The Board Building Cycle, as discussed on the next page, is an overview of the process of building a strong board. Non-profits can use this cycle to reorganize their current board or improve upon their existing board by identifying parts of this cycle that characterize strengths and weaknesses.

Nine Steps of the Board Building Cycle



Step 1: Identify board needs (skills, knowledge, perspective, connections, etc., needed to implement the strategic plan). What do we have? What is missing? Identify sources of board members with the needed characteristics.

Step 2: Cultivate potential board members. Get them interested in your organization and keep them informed of your progress.

Step 3: Recruit prospects. Describe why a prospective member is wanted and needed. Describe expectations and responsibilities of board members, and don't minimize requirements. Invite questions, and elicit their interest and preparedness to serve.

Step 4: Orient new board members to the organization—program, history, bylaws, pressing issues, finances, facilities, organization chart—and to the board—recent minutes, committees, board member responsibilities, lists of board members and key staff members.

Step 5: Activate all board members. Discover their interests and availability. Involve them in committees or task forces. Assign them a board "buddy." Solicit feedback. Hold everyone accountable. Express appreciation for work well done.

Step 6: Educate the board. Provide information concerning your mission area. Promote exploration of issues facing the organization. Don't hide difficulties.

Step 7: Rotate board members. Establish and use term limits. Do not automatically re-elect for an additional term; consider the board's needs and the board member's performance. Explore advisability of resigning with members who are not active. Develop new leadership.

Step 8: Evaluate the board and individual board members. Engage the board in assessing its own performance. Identify ways in which to improve. Encourage individual self-assessment.

Step 9: Celebrate! Recognize victories and progress, even small ones. Appreciate individual contributions to the board, the organization, and the community. Make room for humor and a good laugh.

Board Profile Worksheet

Expertise/Skills/Personal Data

This worksheet can be adapted by organizations to assess their current board composition and plan for the future. The board development committee can develop an appropriate grid for the organization and then present its findings to the full board. In considering board building, an organization is legally obligated to follow its bylaws, which may include specific criteria on board size, structure, and composition. Or the bylaws may need to be updated to incorporate and acknowledge changes in the environment and community that have made changes in the board structure necessary or desirable. Remember, an organization will look for different skills and strengths from its board members depending on its stage of development and other circumstances.

Current Members Prospective Members

[illegible]

[illegible]

BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

JOB DESCRIPTION

Introduction

Boards of nonprofit organizations have customarily used nomination committees to identify and recommend new directors. Often these committees meet just a few times a year, usually before the annual meeting at which new trustees are elected. A growing trend among non-profit boards is the establishment of a committee to deal with range of governance issues. This committee is called "Committee on Trustee" or "Board Development Committee".

Purpose

The Board Development Committee is responsible for ongoing review and recommendations to enhance the quality and future viability of the Board of Trustees. The Board Development Committee works very closely with the school head and the Board Chair. The Board Development Committee determines the composition of the board—identifying, recruiting, and proposing new trustees. This committee also facilitates the board's self-assessment; plans for leadership succession; and plans for trustee professional development through orientation, training, and ongoing education. It focuses heavily on five areas.

Responsibilities

1. Board Roles and Responsibilities

- Lead the board in regularly reviewing and updating the board's statement of its mission, role and areas of responsibility, and the expectations of individual trustees.
- Assist the board in periodically updating and clarifying the primary areas of focus for the board—the board's agenda for the next year, based on the strategic plan.

2. Board Recruitment

- Lead in assessment of the current and anticipated needs for board composition. The Committee should determine the knowledge, attributes, skills, abilities, influence and access the board will need to consider the issues and topics that will come before the board in the foreseeable future.
- Develop a profile of the board as it should evolve over time.
- Identify potential board candidates, present as possibilities, and explore their interest and availability (establish pool of candidates)
- Make sure that there is sufficient information on each one so that the committee can make educated decisions.
- Interview likely candidates to ascertain their interest and to begin the education process.
- Develop a slate of new trustees, with back-up candidates for each vacancy.
- Ask chosen candidates if they will serve.
- Present a slate of trustees to the board for approval.
- Review and revise board recruitment materials.
- In cooperation with board chair, meet annually with each trustee to assess his/her continuing interest in board membership and the term of service. Work with each trustee to identify the appropriate post (trustee role) s/he might assume on behalf of the school.

3. Board Training

- Develop and review "Board Development Plan" for the year.
- Design and oversee a process of board orientation, including information prior to election as a trustee and information needed during the first cycle of board activity for new board members (usually a year)
- Design and implement an ongoing program of board information and education to help board members.

4. Board Effectiveness & Accountability

- Lead the periodic assessment of the board's performance. Facilitate board self-assessment and provide other evaluation tools.
- Propose, as appropriate, changes in board structure, role and responsibilities.
- Provide ongoing counsel to the board chair and other board leaders on steps s/he might take to enhance board effectiveness.
- Regularly review the board's practices regarding member participation, conflict of interest, confidentiality, etc., and suggest improvements as needed.
- Periodically review and update the board's bylaws, policy guidelines and practices.

5. Board Leadership

- Take the lead in succession planning, taking steps to recruit and prepare for future board leadership and recommend an officer slate to the board for its approval.

Relationship to the Board:

Works closely with the board chair, who serves on the committee ex-officio. Includes the board in the process, especially in the areas of assessment, development of selection criteria, and identification of potential candidates. The full board approves the slate of trustees, officers, and members of the committee on trustees, if that is part of the committee's charge.

Relationship to the Head:

Works closely with the head, who serves on the committee ex-officio. Seeks advice of the head on all aspects of the committee's work. Head should be involved in and have a voice in the meetings with potential trustees and new trustee orientation.

Resources:

- Board self-assessment tools
- Nominating grid
- Strategic plan
- Orientation information
- Bylaws – policies
- Diversity goals
- Board manual
- Trustee expectations

This information is adapted from *Board Building Cycle: Nine Steps to Finding, Recruiting, and Engaging Nonprofit Board Members* by Sandra R. Hughes, M. Lakey Berit, and Marla J. Bobowick. Washington, DC: BoardSource, 2000.

Bristol Public Library Board Member Inventory

We expect excellence from our board members. We want board members who use the library services, who advocate for the library in the community, who bring different areas of expertise to the board, and who are dedicated to library funding.

Name _____

Age	
Under 18	
19 – 34	
35 – 50	
51 – 65	
Over 65	
Gender	
Male	
Female	
Race/Ethnicity/Disability	
African American/Black	
Asian/Pacific Islander	
Caucasian	
Hispanic/Latino	
Native American/Indian	
Other	
Disability	
Resources	
Money to give	
Access to money	
Access to other resources (organizations, corporate support)	
Community Connections	
Religious organizations	
Corporate	
Education	
Media	
Political	
Philanthropy	
Small business	
Social services	
Other	
Qualities	
Leadership skills	
Willingness to work	
Personal connection with the organization's mission	
Personal Style	
Bridger	
Analyzer	
Strategist	
Visionary	

Areas of Expertise	
Administration/Management	
Entrepreneurship	
Financial Management	
Accounting	
Banking and trusts	
Investments	
Fund-raising	
Government	
International affairs	
Law	
Marketing, Public relations	
Human resources	
Strategic Planning	
Physical plant (architect, engineer)	
Real Estate	
Representative of clients	
Special program focus (education, health, public policy, social services)	
Technology	
Other	
Number of years (or terms) on the board	

Areas of interest in the library:

Administration/organization: bylaws, finances, board development, marketing, etc.

Children's programming

Adult and community programming

Literacy program

Archiving

Other:
